

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A voice mail device comprising:

a receiving section which receives from a first telephone  
5 terminal an audio packet including audio data in a first encoding  
format;

a packet storing section which stores the audio packet  
including the audio data in the first encoding format received by  
said receiving section; and

10 a transmitting section which transmits to a second telephone  
terminal the audio packet stored in said packet storing section.

2. The voice mail device as set forth in claim 1, further  
comprising

an encoding format determining section which communicates  
15 with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format  
of audio data,

wherein said transmitting section transmits to the second  
telephone terminal the stored audio packet when the determined  
encoding format is the first encoding format.

20 3. The voice mail device as set forth in claim 1, further  
comprising:

an encoding format determining section which communicates  
with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format  
of audio data; and

25 a transcoding section which transcodes the audio data included  
in the audio packet stored in said packet storing section, based  
on the determination by said encoding format determining section.

4. The voice mail device as set forth in claim 3, further

comprising:

a transcoded audio storing section which stores audio data transcoded by said transcoding section;

5 a packet converting section which converts the transcoded audio data stored in said transcoded audio storing section to an audio packet; and

a packet transmitting section which transmits to the second telephone terminal the audio packet resulting from the conversion by said packet converting section.

10 5. The voice mail device as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a first audio data storing section which stores the audio data in the first encoding format;

15 a second audio data storing section which stores the audio data in a second encoding format;

an encoding format determining section which communicates with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format of audio data;

20 an audio data selecting section which selects the audio data stored in one of said first and second audio data storing sections based on the determination by said encoding format determining section;

25 a packet converting section which converts the audio data selected by said audio data selecting section to an audio packet; and

a packet transmitting section which transmits the audio packet resulting from the conversion by said packet converting section.

6. The voice mail device as set forth in claim 5, further

comprising

a packet receiving section which receives a first audio packet including the audio data in the first encoding format and a second audio packet including the audio data in the second encoding format,

5            wherein said first and second audio data storing sections store the first and second audio data included in the first and second audio packets received by said packet receiving section.

7.    The voice mail device as set forth in claim 6, wherein said packet receiving section receives the first and second audio  
10    packets transmitted from a telephone terminal.

8.    The voice mail device as set forth in claim 6, wherein said packet receiving section receives first and second audio packets originating in audio data recorded in a storage medium.

9.    A voice mail communication method, comprising:  
15       receiving from a first telephone terminal an audio packet including audio data in a first encoding format;  
         storing the received audio packet including the audio data in the first encoding format; and  
         transmitting the stored audio packet to a second telephone  
20    terminal.

10.   The voice mail communication method as set forth in claim 9, further comprising

communicating with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format of audio data,

25       wherein the stored audio packet is transmitted to the second telephone terminal when the determined encoding format is the first encoding format.

11.   The voice mail communication method as set forth in claim

9, further comprising:

communicating with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format of audio data; and

transcoding the audio data included in the stored audio packet,  
5 based on the determined encoding format.

12. The voice mail communication method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising:

storing the transcoded audio data;

converting the stored transcoded audio data to an audio packet;

10 and

transmitting the audio packet resulting from the conversion to the second telephone terminal.

13. The voice mail communication method as set forth in claim 9, further comprising:

15 storing the audio data in the first encoding format;

storing the audio data in a second encoding format;

communicating with the second telephone terminal to determine an encoding format of audio data;

selecting the stored audio data in one of the first and second  
20 encoding formats based on the determined encoding format;

converting the selected audio data to an audio packet; and

transmitting the audio packet resulting from the conversion.

14. The voice mail communication method as set forth in claim 13, further comprising

25 receiving a first audio packet including the audio data in the first encoding format and a second audio packet including the audio data in the second encoding format,

wherein the stored audio data in the first and second encoding

formats are the audio data in the first and second encoding formats included in the received first and second audio packets.

15. The voicemail communication method as set forth in claim 14, wherein the received first and second audio packets are  
5 transmitted from a telephone terminal.

16. The voicemail communication method as set forth in claim 14, wherein the received first and second audio packets originate in audio data recorded in a storage medium.